

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY DESIGNATION

2014/2015 APPLICATION

Eligible Applicants:

- *Local Government*
- *Local Government Consortium*

Sustainable Communities Application Rounds

Round XI: October 2, 2014

Round XII: February 5, 2015

Round XIII: June 4, 2015

Round XIV: October 1, 2015

Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development
Division of Neighborhood Revitalization
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RAYMOND A. SKINNER, *Secretary*
CLARENCE J. SNUGGS, *Deputy Secretary*

OVERVIEW OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

Aiming for “sustainability” and promoting “sustainable communities” has gained great momentum in recent years. Leaders and community stakeholders increasingly recognize the importance of ensuring that scarce investment resources result in a more sustainable economy and improved community quality-of-life for all citizens.

There are many definitions for “sustainability.” According to the World Commission on Environment and Development, “Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”¹ With respect to developing sustainable communities, people also often organize strategies according to the categories of “People, Place and Planet.”

Relatedly, at the national level, the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD), Department of Transportation (DOT), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have committed to coordinate their capital investments in alignment with the following six “Livability Principles”:

1. **Support existing communities.** Target public and private resources toward existing communities—through strategies like transit oriented, mixed-use development, and land recycling—to increase community revitalization and the efficiency of public works investments and to safeguard rural landscapes.
2. **Value communities and neighborhoods.** Enhance the unique characteristics of all communities by investing in healthy, safe, and walkable neighborhoods—rural, urban, or suburban.
3. **Coordinate and leverage policies and investment.** Align policies and funding to remove barriers to collaboration, leverage funding, and increase the accountability and effectiveness of all levels of government to plan for future growth, including making smart energy choices such as locally generated renewable energy.
4. **Enhance economic competitiveness.** Improve economic competitiveness through reliable and timely access to employment centers, educational opportunities, services and other basic needs by workers, as well as expanded business access to markets.
5. **Promote equitable, affordable housing.** Expand location and energy-efficient housing choices for people of all ages, incomes, races, and ethnicities to increase mobility and lower the combined cost of housing and transportation.
6. **Provide more transportation choices.** Develop safe, reliable, and economical transportation choices to decrease household transportation costs, reduce our nation’s dependence on foreign oil, improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and promote public health.

In Maryland, the O’Malley-Brown Administration’s approach to Smart Growth and sustainable development has emphasized the revitalization of the State’s communities and protection of its natural resources, while also

¹ World Commission on Environment and Development. 1987, from “One Earth to One World: An Overview.” Oxford: Oxford University Press.

investing in innovation that leads to the growth of a vibrant economy and job base. This approach is *Smart, Green and Growing*.

The Sustainable Communities Act of 2010 was a great step forward toward reinvestment and revitalization in our State's existing communities through the reauthorization of the MD Heritage Structure Rehabilitation Tax Credit as the Sustainable Communities Tax Credit and simplification of the targeting of State revitalization resources into a single focus area called "Sustainable Community Areas." In the Act, Sustainable Community Areas are defined as places where public and private investments and partnerships achieve:

- Development of a healthy local economy;
- Protection and appreciation of historical and cultural resources;
- A mix of land uses;
- Affordable and sustainable housing, and employment options;
- Growth and development practices that protect the environment and conserve air, water and energy resources, encourage walkability and recreational opportunities, and where available, create access to transit.

So, while there are a number of frameworks for sustainability and livability, all aim to "break down silos" and achieve more integrated and balanced approaches to community planning and investment. This request for proposals will attempt to take the best from various approaches to planning for "community sustainability" to provide a framework for the development of local Sustainable Community Action Plans.

This is one next step in the implementation of the 2010 Act. *Through this application, eligible applicants will propose two things:*

- (1) **Apply for designation or re-designation of boundaries for Sustainable Community Areas - formerly known as Community Legacy Areas and Designated Neighborhoods and including Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Zones and designated Transit Oriented Development Zones (TODs).**
- (2) **Submit a Sustainable Community Action Plan, a summary of initiatives and projects for the revitalization of Sustainable Community (SC) Areas according to local priorities.**

Sustainable Community Action Plan

The January 2010 report, "Sustainable Maryland: Accelerating Investment in the Revitalization and Livability of Maryland's Neighborhoods," reviewed Maryland's tool kit for revitalization and the impact of these tools over the last fifteen years. That report, developed at the request of the Task Force on the Future for Growth and Development in Maryland, found that the Maryland communities that have made the most revitalization progress share the follow characteristics:

- *A specific local target area* that has attained multiple State "designations" that make the community eligible for maximum access to State revitalization funding;
- *Strong local leadership and partners* from the public and private sectors that coordinate and leverage financing to implement ongoing initiatives; and,
- *A multi-year investment strategy* that is both realistic and ambitious, providing a road map for local stakeholders to create a more sustainable economy and livable community life.

These findings informed the content of the 2010 SC Act, recognizing the importance of local leadership and locally driven and targeted plans. These locally generated Sustainable Community Action Plans (SC Plans) are to include a range of revitalization strategies and projects that prevent or reverse the decline of or disinvestment

in a Sustainable Community Areas (SC Areas) through improvements in residential, commercial, or other public or private properties and resources and can also result in reduction of community environmental impacts.

All pre-existing Community Legacy and Designated Neighborhoods designations have expired as of December 31, 2013. All local governments that would like to have a community considered for a Sustainable Communities designation must submit an application for a 5-year designation.

Sustainable Communities – Application Rounds

Round XI: October 2, 2014

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Complete applications received by the closing date of each round will be reviewed by State inter-agency teams, and recommendations will be presented to the Secretary of the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and then to the Smart Growth Subcabinet within approximately three months. It is recommended that applicants begin this process by reviewing their revitalization plans for areas that were formerly designated as Community Legacy Areas or Designated Neighborhoods.

Sustainable Community Area Benefits

The Sustainable Communities Act of 2010 created a consolidated area for revitalization investment called “Sustainable Community Areas.” The list below reflects the *current* State programs that are contributing resources to designated Sustainable Community (SC) areas:

Community Legacy Program (CL) is administered by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development and provides local governments and community development organizations with financial assistance to strengthen communities through such activities as business retention and attraction, encouraging homeownership and commercial revitalization. CL funds are restricted to SC Areas.

Strategic Demolition and Smart Growth Impact Fund (SDSGIF) is administered by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development and provides grants and loans to local governments and community development organizations for predevelopment activities including demolition and land assembly for housing and revitalization projects. SDSGIF catalyzes public and private investment in the reuse of vacant and underutilized sites. SDSGIF dollars are restricted to SC areas.

Neighborhood BusinessWorks Program (NBW) is administered by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development and provides loans through gap financing, i.e. subordinate financing, to new or expanding small businesses and nonprofit organizations. NBW funds are restricted to SC Areas.

Maryland Sustainable Communities Tax Credit Program (Small Commercial Tax Credit). In 2014 the Maryland General Assembly expanded the tax credit program to include a Small Commercial Tax Credit. The small commercial category will help fund modest rehabilitation projects that have historically struggled to compete for the large-scale commercial awards. Eligible projects may earn a state income tax credit equal to 20 percent of qualified rehabilitation expenditures. Small commercial properties must be certified as historic, located within a designated Sustainable Community, and must not contain more than 75% residential rental use. The credit is capped at \$50,000 in a 24-month period and eligible costs must be between \$5,000 and \$500,000 to qualify. The Small Commercial Tax Credit program is administered by the Maryland Historical Trust. Applications will be available beginning September 1, 2014 for preliminary review; however, projects cannot begin work and will not be certified prior to January 1, 2015.

Enhanced Local Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Authority. During the 2013 Maryland General Session, House Bill 613: Sustainable Communities – Designation and Financing was passed. The law not only enables the Maryland Economic Development Corporation to support local governments with designated Sustainable Communities by issuing bonds to finance public improvements, but it also expands the permitted use of TIF beyond traditional public infrastructure. The law broadened the set of eligible uses of TIF in Sustainable Communities to include historic preservation or rehabilitation; environmental remediation; demolition and site preparation; parking lots, facilities or structures of any type, public or private; highways; schools; and affordable or mixed-income housing. Local governments with Sustainable Communities may also pledge alternative local tax revenues generated within or attributed to the TIF district to its associated special fund.

Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC). In response to the Governor’s Smart, Green and Growing Initiative, the DHCD CDA incorporated “Priority Project Categories” into the competitive scoring criteria of LIHTC applications. Eight points will be allocated to projects located in a MDOT-designation Transit Oriented Development (TOD) area. (All MDOT TOD areas are Sustainable Communities.) For areas that are not MDOT TODs, but are Sustainable Communities, applications will be awarded four additional points.

Job Creation Tax Credit is administered by the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development (DBED). Maryland provides a tax credit to encourage businesses expanding in or relocating to Maryland. Enhanced incentives are provided in Sustainable Communities. The standard credit is 2.5% of annual wages up to \$1,000 per new job. For businesses located in a Sustainable Community, the credit is 5% of annual wages up to \$1,500 per new job; and, the threshold to qualify for the tax credit drops from 60 to 25 jobs created.

Sidewalk Retrofit Program is administered by the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT). This program helps finance the construction and replacement of sidewalks along state highways (Maryland and U.S. Routes, other than expressways). The program covers 50 percent of the cost for approved projects. For projects located in a Sustainable Community, the program covers 100 percent of the cost.

Maryland Bikeways Program is administered by MDOT. It supports projects that maximize bicycle access and fill missing links in the state’s bike system. Additional points awarded in application evaluation for projects located in or connecting to a designated Sustainable Community. Sustainable Communities are considered also considered a “priority investment area” under the bikeways program and projects may be eligible for reduced matching requirements.

Community Safety and Enhancement Program is administered by the Maryland State Highway Administration and provides funding for transportation improvements along state highways that support planned or on-going revitalization efforts. Improvements typically include pedestrian and vehicular safety, intersection capacity/operations, sidewalks, roadway reconstruction or resurfacing, drainage repair/upgrade and landscaping. Projects must be in a Priority Funding Area and communities designated as a Sustainable Community are given preference.

Water Quality Revolving Loan Fund Water Quality Revolving Loan Fund is administered by the Maryland Department of the Environment’s Water Quality Financing Administration. It provides below market interest rate loans and additional subsidies such as loan-forgiveness and grants to finance: construction of publicly-owned wastewater treatment works, implementation of non-point source/estuary capital improvements, and/or implementation of US EPA defined “green” projects (i.e. green infrastructure water efficiency, energy efficiency/climate change, environmentally innovative). Projects are ranked and can receive up to 100 points. Up to 25 points can be awarded to a project with sustainability benefits including 7 points for projects in designated Sustainable Communities.

Growth and Revitalization Planning Areas recognition in PlanMD: PlanMD, Maryland's State Development Plan, recognizes Sustainable Community Areas as initial areas for priority State coordination and investment.

In addition, the 2010 SC Act noted that MDOT's Transportation investments would recognize SC Areas in the planning and utilization of its resources.

Application Eligibility and Threshold Requirements

Local governments (municipal or county) are eligible to apply. Eligible applicants are to form a local **Sustainable Communities Workgroup** that will develop and guide implementation of Sustainable Community Action Plans. The purpose of this workgroup is to establish working relationships and collaborations among local governmental departments and better align community development priorities and strategies. For example, the **Sustainable Communities Workgroup** should include representatives from key governmental departments, such as Community and Economic Development, Planning, Transportation, Parks and Recreation and Historic Preservation. The **Sustainable Communities Workgroup** could also include non-governmental organization partners such as Main Street Organizations, Community Development Corporations, Community/Neighborhood Associations, as well as key employers and other stakeholders in the community. Applications are required to include a roster of the workgroup members.

All SC Area applications must meet the following threshold requirements:

- 1) Sustainable Community Area boundaries must be entirely within a Priority Funding Area (PFA) and should be indicative of a targeted approach;
- 2) A local government resolution in support of the boundary designation and Plan should accompany the application or must be in process (all SC Area designations will be contingent upon an executed local resolution);
- 3) Entities in the community must have pledged financial and/or in-kind resources to implement the Plan as indicated by letters of support;
- 4) The proposed Sustainable Community is within or near a town center or transportation center, or there is a need for financing assistance for small businesses, nonprofit organizations or microenterprises;
- 5) The proposed Plan must be consistent with other existing community or comprehensive plans;
- 6) A Sustainable Communities Workgroup is formed and a roster of members is provided.

Applications that do not meet these threshold requirements will not be considered.

Application Evaluation

The Sustainable Community application will be scored using the following 120-point framework:

- Sustainable Community Baseline Information (20 Points)
- Local Capacity To Implement Plans & Projects (15 Points)
- Sustainable Community Action Plan (65 Points)
- Progress Measures (20 Points)

Priority Funding Areas

All Sustainable Communities must be located entirely within PFA(s). Applicants can verify PFA boundaries by visiting the Maryland Department of Planning website at:

<http://www.mdp.state.md.us/OurProducts/pfamap.shtml>

Mandatory Training and Online Application

Attendance at a minimum of one application training session is **mandatory for all applicants**. Consult with Mary Kendall at 410-209-5810 or by email at kendall@mdhousing.org if you would like to schedule an application training.

In addition, all applicants are required to submit their respective Sustainable Community application and Plan through the DHCD online portal located on the Department's website. Each applicant will receive a password to access the portal. Additionally, each applicant must submit three hard copies (one original and two copies) of their application with all required attachments.

DHCD reserves the right to not consider incomplete applications.

The first printed page of the electronic application is a Table of Contents. This should also serve as a checklist and be used to provide corresponding tabs. In addition to the hard copies of an application, all pictures and maps are to be submitted on a CD-ROM. Pictures should be burned to the CD in a JPEG format and maps should be burned to the CD in a pdf format. Please ALSO include GIS shapefiles of Sustainable Community boundaries and other GIS related data. Please label your files on the CD-ROM appropriately, i.e., "Proposed 2013 Sustainable Community Boundary," "Current Sustainable Community Boundary," etc.

No incomplete applications will be accepted.

Deliver Sustainable Community Applications to:

Sustainable Community Application
ATTN: Mary Kendall
Division of Neighborhood Revitalization
Department of Housing and Community Development
10 North Calvert Street, Suite 444
Baltimore, MD 21202
410-209-5800

Site Visits and Follow-up Discussion

During the application review process, the review teams may make site visits and/or hold meetings with applicants. In addition, applicants may be contacted by DHCD for follow-up discussions prior to awards.

Approval

Approval of applications will be made by the Governor's Smart Growth Subcabinet on the recommendation of the Secretary of Housing and Community Development. A State inter-agency team will review applications and make recommendations to the DHCD Secretary.

Assistance with the Sustainable Community Application

Questions regarding technical information using the online application *only*, please call Virginia Tepper, phone 410-514-7259 or email tepper@mdhousing.org.

All other questions related to application content, please contact Mary Kendall at 410-209-5810 or by email at Kendall@dhcd.state.md.us.

Sustainable Community Application 2014/2015

I. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name of Sustainable Community:

Name of Applicant:

Applicant's Federal Identification Number:

Applicant's Street Address:

City:

County:

State:

Zip Code:

Phone Number:

Fax Number:

Web Address:

Sustainable Community Application Local Contact:

Name:

Title:

Address:

City:

State:

Zip Code:

Phone Number:

Fax Number:

E-mail Address:

Sustainable Community Contact for Application Status:

Name:

Title:

Address:

City:

State:

Zip Code:

Phone Number:

Fax Number:

E-mail Address:

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II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION (20 Points)

Through this section, applicants will demonstrate that *trends and conditions* in homeownership, property values, employment, commercial and residential vacancy, community facilities and infrastructure, natural resources, the local business and residential districts *show a need for new or continued revitalization reinvestment*.

Demographic data and trends provided by Applicants should support the choice of the proposed Sustainable Community Area boundary and help form a basis for needs and opportunities to be addressed through the initiatives and projects described in the Sustainable Community Action Plan (Section IV). Applicants should demonstrate why these strategies are targeted for the sustainable community area.

POINTS IN THIS SECTION WILL BE AWARDED BASED ON THE SC AREA'S NEED FOR REINVESTMENT AS EVIDENCED BY THOROUGH DESCRIPTIONS OF CURRENT CONDITIONS OR TRENDS (and will not be based upon current or planned revitalization activities which will be covered in Section IV).

(**Answers to all questions in this application should be no more than 4,000 characters**)

A. Proposed Sustainable Community Area(s): (5 points)

- (1) Name of proposed Sustainable Community Area(s): _____
- (2) Provide a description of SC Area boundaries. In addition to the written description on-line, include as an attachment hard copies of the of the project location map. Also include on a CD-ROM a pdf of the proposed Sustainable Community and a **GIS shapefile of proposed Sustainable Community boundaries and other GIS related data**, e.g., spreadsheet of detailed listing of parcels that form the project boundary. Please also include on a CD-ROM, pictures of your Sustainable Community as it relates to your application. If applicable, label and show targeted areas within the boundaries. (Attachment 2)
- (3) Approximate number of acres within the SC Area: _____
- (4) Existing federal, state or local designations:
 - ☐Community Legacy Area ☐ Designated Neighborhood ☐Main Street ☐Maple Street
 - ☐National Register Historic District ☐Local Historic District ☐ Arts & Entertainment District
 - ☐State Enterprise Zone Special Taxing District ☐BRAC ☐ State Designated TOD
 - ☐ Other(s):
- (5) Prior Revitalization Investments & Smart Growth:
 - (a) *List and describe any significant State and local smart growth or revitalization related program investments* (for instance, Community Legacy or SC Rehab Tax Credit) that have been invested in the Area since the launching of Maryland's Smart Growth initiative and programs in 1997 (including Housing investment). What impact have these investments made in the community?
 - (b) *Describe any existing barriers to Smart Growth* that may affect your jurisdiction or the proposed SC Area. For instance, does your area have higher development fees than outer "cornfields"?

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B. Community Conditions: Strengths and Weaknesses (5 points)

- (1) *Describe the strengths and weaknesses in the proposed Area's existing built environment.* For example, what is the condition of housing? Are there underutilized historic buildings and cultural places? What is the condition and availability of community parks and recreational assets? Are there transportation assets? What is the current condition of community infrastructure such as roads and lighting?
- (2) *Describe the Area's land use/zoning make-up* (residential, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use). Is the current land use or zoning conducive to revitalization investment?
- (3) *Describe strengths and weaknesses in basic features of community quality-of-life.* For instance, is crime an issue for this SC Area? What is the condition and quality of educational choices available to the community? Are artistic, cultural, or community resources, events or facilities within or accessible to residents in the proposed SC Area?

C. Natural Resources and Environmental Impact: Strengths and Weaknesses (5 points)

- (1) *Describe the strengths and weaknesses of the community's "natural environment"* in or near the Sustainable Community Area. What is the *current condition* of key natural resources – lands, air, water, watersheds, tree canopy, other? If the community is located in a coastal zone, what risks might the community be subject to associated with climate induced sea level rise?
- (2) *Describe the strengths and weaknesses of any current efforts to reduce the community's "carbon footprint" or impact on the environment.* Is recycling (commercial or residential) available to minimize waste? Are there current efforts to encourage the purchase and availability of fresh local food and other local products and services to the community? Describe any current energy or water conservation efforts that may be underway. If the community has not implemented one of the above initiatives, has the community identified a need or interest to pursue these or other efforts to reduce environmental impact, for instance through the new Sustainable Maryland Certified initiative?
- (3) *Describe the strengths and weaknesses of the jurisdiction's current stormwater management practices and how these may affect the proposed SC Area.* Is redevelopment and retrofitting of infrastructure an issue or opportunity in this SC Area? Stormwater runoff is a significant source of pollution to Maryland's streams and the Chesapeake Bay. Buildings constructed before 1985 have little or no stormwater controls, and development between 1985 and 2010 have some controls. Updated stormwater regulations passed by Maryland's General Assembly in 2010 require that development and redevelopment projects utilize stringent stormwater controls. Sustainable Community Areas may have opportunities for redevelopment practices that can reduce stormwater flows.

D. Economic Conditions and Access to Opportunity: Strengths and Weaknesses (5 points)

- (1) *Describe the SC Area's current economic strengths and weaknesses.* For example, are there distinct economic drivers in the area or region that will affect access to job opportunities and the progress of the SC Plan? What are the main barriers to the Area's economic competitiveness? What is the current level of broadband access available to serve residents, businesses and public facilities? What efforts are currently in place to increase worker skills and employment? Describe trends in employment rates and business formation.

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- (2) *Describe the jurisdiction's housing market and access to affordable workforce housing. What are the trends in residential construction (rental and homeownership), homeownership rate, foreclosure rate and, property values? Describe whether your jurisdiction's prevailing housing costs – both homeownership and rental – are affordable to households below 120% AMI, 80% AMI and 50% AMI. What efforts are in place currently to house individuals, families and the disabled at or below the AMI levels described above?*
- (3) *Describe the SC Area's demographic trends (with respect to age, race, household size, household income, educational attainment, or other relevant factors).*

III. LOCAL CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT PLANS AND PROJECTS (15 Points)

A. Organizational Structure:

Describe the Applicant's organizational structure. Specifically, which organizations are members in the **Sustainable Communities Workgroup** and who are the respective staff? Who are the leaders, and how will the Workgroup advisor or staff manage implementation of the SC Area Plan?

B. Organizational Experience:

Describe the Applicant organization's past experience in administering revitalization plans and projects. Describe the roles of the members of the **Sustainable Communities Workgroup**, including their experience in implementing revitalization initiatives. What are the strengths and challenges of the capacity of these groups with respect to implementation of the SC Plan?

C. Public Input:

How did residents and other stakeholders in the community provide input to the Action Plan described below in Section IV?

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN (65 points)

The Sustainable Community Action Plan (SC Plan or Plan) is meant to be a multi-year investment strategy – a strategic set of revitalization initiatives and projects that local partners believe will increase the economic vitality and livability of their community, increased prosperity for local households and improved health of the surrounding environment. The Plan should be flexible enough to be updated regularly and renewed every five years as the community envisions new goals. The priority initiatives and projects identified in sections are your priorities for improving the livability of community places -- residential, commercial, or other public or private properties – and the sustainability of new work, retail, recreational and housing opportunities for residents. At the same time, the plan should describe how it is geographically targeted, so that resources have the best opportunity to have the intended effect. These projects can also be designed to reduce the environmental impact of the community through water and energy resource conservation and management strategies. In this way, the Plan can be a road map for local stakeholders as well as State agencies to work together to create a more a livable and sustainable community.

A. Supporting existing communities & reducing environmental impacts. (15 points)

(1) A community's approach to Smart Growth generally includes two inter-related areas of focus: encouraging reinvestment and growth in existing communities; and, discouraging growth that degrades natural resources, and farms and rural landscapes. *Broadly describe your jurisdiction's Smart Growth approach and any significant accomplishments made over the last decade or so.*

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(2) *Describe any major investments in community infrastructure – water, stormwater, sewer, sidewalk, lighting, etc. – that must be undertaken in order to improve the readiness or competitiveness of the proposed SC Area for private investment and compliance (if applicable) with TMDL regulations.* Addressing the stormwater during redevelopment can reduce the pollution entering our streams and contribute to the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay. Investments in infrastructure, generally, can be an important catalyst for new private investment in the community.

(3) *Describe policies, initiatives or projects that the community will undertake or expand in order to reduce the SC Area's impact on the environment.* Examples include but are not limited to: conservation or management of stormwater through retrofitting of streets and by-ways (Green Streets, rain gardens, etc.); retrofitting of facilities and homes for energy conservation; implementation of “green” building codes and mixed-use zoning; recycling of waste; clean-ups of watersheds; and, encouragement of “Buy Local” approaches that benefit local suppliers and food producers. A comprehensive menu of such actions may be found through the Environmental Finance Center's Sustainable Maryland Certified Initiative.

(4) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section?

B. Valuing communities and neighborhoods -- building upon assets and building in amenities: (10 points)

(1) *What are the key assets that exist in the community upon which the Plan's projects and initiatives will build?* Assets may include physical assets such as parks and historic structures and also civic and economic assets such as employers, educational institutions, and cultural organizations and activities.

(2) *What policies, initiatives or projects will reuse or enhance the historical assets, traditional business districts/Main Streets and cultural resources of the community?* What actions will reinforce your community's authentic “sense of place” and historic character?

(3) *Describe policies, initiatives or projects that will increase community access to green spaces, parks and other amenities?* A community can gain social and physical benefits from access to a healthy natural environment. The inclusion of complete streets, trails, green space, parks and trees contribute to the character and health of a community. Examples might include improvements to the tree canopy by planting street trees, improving local neighborhood streams, or reusing a vacant lot for a new community park or playground.

(4) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section?

C. Enhancing economic competitiveness and access to economic opportunity. (10 points)

(1) *What economic development policies, initiatives or projects will improve the economy through investments in small businesses and other key employment sectors?* What economic development and business incentives will you build upon or implement as part of the SC Plan? Examples could include but are not limited to: green-taping for expedited project application review; permitting and inspection; job training; business tax credits; and revolving loan funds.

(2) *What workforce development policies, initiatives or projects will increase access to jobs and economic opportunity for residents in the SC Area?* Do you have a goal for job creation? Are “green jobs” an opportunity in the jurisdiction or SC Area?

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(3) *Describe whether the Sustainable Community will be impacted by the Base Re-alignment and Closure (BRAC) activities in Maryland. If impacted, how do the initiatives and projects in your Plan complement BRAC-related growth? (If not applicable, all ten points will be assessed based on answers to questions 1, 2, and 4)*

(4) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section?

D. Promoting equitable access to high quality affordable housing. (10 points)

(1) *What housing policies, initiatives or projects will expand housing choices – rental and homeownership – for people of a range of ages, incomes, and also for disabled individuals? How will these actions address the current housing conditions and needs noted in Section II?*

(2) *Will these housing initiatives or projects increase access to transit or community walkability and/or decrease transportation costs? In other words, will the housing investments result in more people living near work or town centers, or able to more conveniently reach work, school, shopping and/or recreation?*

(3) *What is your goal for number of units to be created of affordable workforce housing, rental and homeownership? What populations (by income or special needs) will benefit from this increased access to affordable housing?*

(4) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section?

E. Supporting transportation efficiency and access. (10 points)

(1) *What policies, strategies and projects are envisioned to strengthen the transportation network that affects the proposed SC Area? How will these initiatives support transportation choices (including walking, bicycling, bus or rail transit, and carpooling) or otherwise promote an efficient transportation network that integrates housing and transportation land uses?*

(2) *If applicable, describe the SC Area's connection or proximity to transportation centers (e.g. Metro, MARC, and light rail stations) and describe opportunities for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD). Will the planned strategies and projects contribute to jobs/housing balance or otherwise provide a mix of land uses that can be expected to reduce reliance on single-occupancy automobiles? (If transit or TOD is not applicable in your community, all points in this section will be based on questions 1 and 3)*

(3) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section?

F. Coordinating and leveraging (federal, state, and local) policies and investment. (10 points)

(1) What specific steps will the Sustainable Community Workgroup take to coordinate policies and funding streams to remove barriers to investment and maximize and increase funding in the proposed Sustainable Community Area?

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(2) How is the proposed Sustainable Community Plan consistent with other existing community or comprehensive plans?

(3) How will the Plan help leverage and/or sustain more private sector investments?

V. PROGRESS MEASURES (20 points)

In this section, explain how your jurisdiction will measure its progress towards the goals of the Action Plan outlined in Section IV.

- A. List the specific outcomes that the Plan seeks to produce. (15 points)
- B. And, list the specific benchmarks that will be used to measure progress toward these outcomes. (5 points)

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Local Government Resolution - Sample

Resolution of [INSERT Name of Local Governing Body] to designate the [INSERT Name/description of Community] as a Sustainable Community, pursuant to the attached Sustainable Community map (and Sustainable Community Plan (the “**Plan**,” as further described in the Sustainable Community Application (the “**Application**”), for approval either directly by the Department of Housing and Community Development (the “**Department**”) of the State of Maryland or through the Smart Growth Subcabinet of the State of Maryland.

WHEREAS, [INSERT Name of Local Governing Body] recognizes that there is a significant need for reinvestment and revitalization of the communities in [INSERT Name of County/City]; and

WHEREAS, [INSERT Name of Local Governing Body] proposes to (i) designate the area of [INSERT Name/description of Community] in [INSERT Name of County/City], as outlined on the attached map (the “**Area**”), as a Sustainable Community, and to (ii) adopt the Plan, as further described in the Application, for the purposes of contributing to the reinvestment and revitalization in the Area; and

WHEREAS, the Area is located within a priority funding area under Section 5-7B-02 of the Smart Growth Act; and

WHEREAS, the applicable law and the Community Legacy Program regulations require a local government to submit an application to the Department in order to become a designated Sustainable Community, and to adopt a satisfactory Sustainable Community Plan in order to be eligible to receive financial assistance under the Community Legacy Program;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, [INSERT Name of Local Governing Body] hereby (i) endorses the designation of the Area as a Sustainable Community; and (ii) adopts the Sustainable Community Plan described in the Application.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the chief elected executive official is hereby requested to endorse this Resolution, indicating his or her approval by signature hereof; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the following persons are hereby authorized to execute documents and take any action necessary to carry out the intent of these resolutions;

Name	Office/Title	Signature
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

and,
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, copies of this Resolution are sent to the Secretary of the Department of Housing and Community Development of the State of Maryland for consideration by the Smart Growth Sub-Cabinet.

READ AND PASSED THIS ____ day of ____, 20____.

BY ORDER: ____, I hereby certify that Resolution Number ____ is true and correct and duly adopted by the ____ (Legislative Body) of ____ (City or County).

ATTEST/WITNESS:

By: _____
Name: _____
Title: _____
Approved By: _____
Name: _____
Title: _____
[Chief elected executive official]
Date: _____

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY APPLICATION

DISCLOSURE AUTHORIZATION AND CERTIFICATION

The undersigned authorizes the Department of Housing and Community Development (the “**Department**”) to make such inquiries as necessary, including, but not limited to, credit inquiries, in order to verify the accuracy of the statements made by the applicant and to determine the creditworthiness of the applicant and the accuracy of the application.

In accordance with Executive Order 01.01.1983.18, the Department advises you that certain personal information is necessary to determine eligibility for financial assistance. Availability of this information for public inspection is governed by Maryland’s Access to Public Records Act, State Government Article, Section 10-611 et seq. of the Annotated Code of Maryland (the “**Act**”). This information will be disclosed to appropriate staff of the Department or to public officials for purposes directly connected with administration of this financial assistance program for which its use is intended. Such information may be shared with State, federal or local government agencies, which have a financial role in the project. The applicant has the right to inspect, amend, or correct personal records in accordance with the Act.

The Department intends to make available to the public the contents of the local governments’ Sustainable Community Plans and the contents of Sustainable Community Applications, including posting of entire applications on the DHCD website, use of such materials at presentations, training sessions, press releases, articles and other means of publication. This information may be confidential under the Act. If the applicant considers this information confidential and does not want it made available to the public, please indicate this objection in writing and attach the same to this application.

The applicant agrees that not attaching an objection constitutes consent to the information being made available to the public as herein described, and a waiver of any rights the applicant may have regarding this information under the Act.

I have read and understand the above paragraph. Applicant’s Initials: _____

Anyone who knowingly makes, or causes to be made, any false statement or report relative to this Application, for the purposes of influencing the action of the Department on such Application, may become ineligible to receive State financial assistance, and is subject to other penalties authorized by law.

The undersigned hereby certifies that s/he is authorized to enter into the agreements and certifications contained herein and in the Application, and further certifies that the information set herein and in any attachment in support hereof is true, correct, and complete to the best of his/her knowledge and belief.

Authorized Signature

Type Name and Title

Date

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY APPLICATION

CHECKLIST AND TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPLICANT: _____

NAME OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY: _____

Please review the checklist of attachments and furnish all of the attachments that are applicable. Contents of the notebook should be tabbed and organized as follows:

- ☐ **Tab #1 Sustainable Community Applicant Information**
- ☐ **TAB #2 - Sustainable Community Baseline Information:** In addition to the narrative about the baseline information included in the Sustainable Communities application, include a hard copy of the of the proposed Sustainable Communities map in Tab 2.
- ☐ **TAB #3 – Local Capacity to Implement Plans & Projects:** Attach **Sustainable Communities Workgroup** roster noted in Section III.
- ☐ **TAB #4 – Sustainable Community Action Plan**
- ☐ **TAB #5 - Progress Measures**
- ☐ **TAB #6 – Local Support Resolution: In addition to the local support resolution, please include any letters of support that demonstrate partner commitments to the implementation and/or oversight of the Sustainable Community Plan.**
- ☐ **TAB #7 – Signed Sustainable Community Application Disclosure Authorization and Certification**
- ☐ **TAB #8 – CD-ROM:** The CD-ROM should include the following contents:
 - Map in pdf format of the proposed Sustainable Community area
 - **GIS shapefile of the proposed Sustainable Community boundaries and other GIS related data,** e.g., spreadsheet of detailed listing of parcels that form the project boundary. (If you have additional comments or questions about the GIS mapping requirements, please contact Brad Wolters, Senior GIS Specialist, DHCD, wolters@mdhousing.org.)
 - Pictures (jpeg format) of your Sustainable Community as it relates to your application